The Church Monthly

MAY, 1936

A Plea for Fellowship

Our Summer Program

The Church Monthly

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THE BOARD OF USHERS OF THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH, 1936

A Plea for Fellowship

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Every great religion contributes to its devotees four major gifts: First, a philosophy of life, basic ideas about the origin, meaning, and goal of existence; Second, ethical guidance, personal and social ideals in the light of which one is enabled to tell right from wrong; Third, interior spiritual resources in the strength of which one can live life well; Fourth, a fellowship, a human society in whose high traditions and kindred aspirations the souls of men are reinforced. Great ideas, great ideals, great resources, and a great fellowship—these are the four major gifts of a powerful religion.

Today is budget Sunday in this church but, far from being an affair of money merely, it raises with every one of us a question about that fourth matter: How much do we believe in the Christian fellowship?

So far as the origins of Christianity are concerned, the facts are plain. Whether within the lifetime of the Master or in the years immediately afterward, whoever fell under his influence faced a four-fold experience: new ideas about life, new ideals for life, new spiritual power with which to live life, and a fellowship in whose company the first three experiences were kept ablaze and for whose tasks sacrificial devotion was claimed. As John Wesley put it, the gospel of Christ knows nothing about a solitary religion.

In our time, however, we have been living through a diminution of emphasis upon that fourth factor. One cause has been that Christian ideas, ideals, and interior resources have long since overflowed the strict confines of the church and, in forms often diluted, to be sure, are to be found in many lives outside. Increasingly, therefore, to be a Christian has been defined in individualistic terms of personal quality so that Professor Whitehead of Harvard can even say that "religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness." Now, if Professor Whitehead means that there is no such thing as genuine religion which does not involve what the individual does with his own solitariness, I agree. I share with you, however, a deep conviction that such three-quarters Christianity—Christian ideas, ideals, and interior resources individually possessed—is not enough. Christianity is a four-legged table and if any leg is knocked away beware lest the whole table collapse. Listen to Paul: "We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." About that leg of the Christian table I ask you conscientiously to think today.

Obviously fellowship is an indispensable part of any deep experience. We cannot live without it, so that even in a prison the severest punishment is solitary confinement, and how Admiral Byrd survived those solitary months in the Antarctic is still a wonder. I am not simply I, but We, and if what We means is stripped away from the I, what is left of the I is merely shadow. What is left would be like the grin on the face of the cat in Alice in Wonder-

land, that stayed after the cat had gone. For I am mostly We.

To suppose that a factor so deeply ingrained in our essential makeup can be left out of religion is incredible. Yet millions in our time have tried to leave it out. I blame myself in this regard, that, in the three books of sermons supposed to represent my message, there is not a single one devoted to the church. For I, too, have been a child of my generation, concerned with the ideas, the ideals, the interior resources of the Christian gospel, and while working in the fellowship have not emphasized it much and have even been apologetic about it, I suspect. Today, therefore, I am not formally preaching a budget sermon but am trying to say something essentially important about that fourth factor of Christianity, that "forgotten man" of the gospel, the church.

In the first place, consider that we never would have had access to the first three factors in Christianity had it not been for the fellowship. That is the bridge over which Christian ideas, ideals, and interior resources have come to us. A very imperfect bridge, to be sure! All human institutions are imperfect, whether churches, schools, or courts. Nevertheless, whatever access we have to education is due to the high tradition of learning that has come down through the schools; whatever justice we may expect is due to the high tradition of the common law that has come down through the courts. Ideas and ideals never live in a vacuum; they always live in a community; they are transmitted by a fellowship; an institution is their indispensable vehicle.

I well remember a Sunday morning in my boyhood in a humble meeting house on the Chautauqua Hills. Old Elder Tennant was in the pulpit, a man who farmed his vineyards through the week and preached on Sunday. Were I to hear his message now, strange indeed would seem his words and his patterns of thought. But there was in his message that Sunday morning something greater than himself, something that he never could have made up by himself, of which he was but the trustee and the transmitter from the great tradition, so that that hour was filled for me with high decision, rememberable yet across half a century, as though somehow in that little meeting house the glorious company of the apostles and the goodly fellowship of the prophets and the noble army of martyrs and the holy church throughout all the world were represented.

Remembering that, there are times in this church when nothing moves me more than dedicating a child. It is as though one could hear the church trying to say to the child through the parents, O little life, so newly come to this strange earth, even at birth we would throw around you the great fellowship; fallible the church has been but we have tried to keep for you a great tradition of high thoughts about life and ways of living it; the world that waits for you out there will drag you down if it can, but here is a fellowship of the noble living and the noble dead in which you may be reminded of divine aims and divine resources; small, young life so newly come, we would introduce you to the communion of the saints.

There are many modern people who still think of the church individualistically as though we by our personal allegiance created it. Friends, the church is rather our spiritual mother. We did not make her up. She was here first. She transmitted to us the Christ and to her we owe our spiritual lives. Thinking

of the world out there as it is going to be this next generation, and then thinking of your children, I should suppose you would want the church's fellowship, as beautiful as you can make it, around yourself and your families.

When, therefore, on budget Sunday we talk about the money it costs to support the fellowship, it seems to me a small matter. Ah, someone says, but you have here so expensive a church! Do you think so? We have three thousand people definitely associated with this church as members, affiliates, and contributors. Forget for a moment our benevolences. Forget the invested funds of the church bearing interest. How much does it cost these three thousand people to support this institution, to pay all its salaries from the boiler room to the carillon and carry on our work seven days and nights a week? It costs them on the average seventy-five cents a week. Granted the benevolences are extra! Granted that many of those three thousand are students or children or persons from whom, for one reason or another, we can expect little or no money, so that some of you have to make up the difference by thousands! Still, do you think that seventy-five cents a week on the average is expensive? Think what New Yorkers spend seventy-five cents for. Think what you spend it for. If we asked for twice that would it be too much? Not if we really believe in the value and possibility of the Christian fellowship.

Consider in the second place the importance of the Christian society when one considers that it is not a matter of choice, that willy-nilly one way or another, good, bad, or indifferent, we are going to have churches. To discuss the church problem in America as though it were a question of church or no church is unrealistic. The question is not whether we are going to have churches but what kind of churches we are going to have. How can a man look at this country today and not see that that is one of the most important questions we face? What kind of churches shall we have in our American communities? I wish I could make you feel the importance of that as it appears to me.

There are three primary fellowships on which a people's character depends—its homes, its schools, and its churches. Those are the three basic, deliberate, character-producing agencies in a nation's culture. If in this land now all were well with our homes, our schools, and our churches, who can measure how well it would be with our people? But all is not well.

Now, all of these three are inevitable. The question is not whether we shall have homes or no homes, but what kind of homes we shall have. The question is not whether we shall have schools or no schools, churches or no churches, but what kind of schools and churches we are going to have. How, then, can a man be easygoing about those three? A bad home is about the worst thing that can befall any one. A bad school is a public disaster. A bad church, insulting the intelligence and alienating the best character of a community, is a social calamity. Has some one here been trying to think that the church question does not concern him? Friend, you cannot get away from it, because in our American communities if we do not have good churches we will have bad churches—ignorant, reactionary, antisocial, sectarian, moribund—and the public calamity involved in that is irreparable.

Well, who was it that said "the first

essential of a quiet funeral is a willing corpse"? As I understand it, the Christian fellowship in this country is a long way from being a willing corpse. On the contrary, there are intimations and prophecies of a new day in the church, with new policies under a new kind of leadership. The decisive element in that fellowship will not be the old sectarianism. Far from it! It will be the community. To belong to the whole community, to serve the best life of the entire community, to welcome without regard to denominational lines the best spiritual life of the community, trying to make the church worthy at least of those signs the electric companies used to put over their stations, "Public Service, Light and Power"—that idea already is approximated by the best of the churches, and I plead for your support in this church because we can help.

Does some one say, But here you have this gorgeous edifice, not at all typical of the implements that the Christian fellowship at large possesses. Let me talk with you about that. This gorgeous edifice can be either a help or a handicap. Have you ever put yourself into the place of the preacher in this gorgeous edifice, supposing that he has caught even a little the spirit of Jesus and is trying to take it seriously in his work? Do you think that this gorgeous edifice necessarily is a help in *that*? Upon the contrary, many a Sunday morning I come into this pulpit haunted by memories of other places, bare, plain, poor, from which some of the noblest spiritual inspirations in history have come—a carpenter shop in Nazareth, an upper room all unadorned where a few poor men met under a great leadership, the catacombs at Rome from which the despised and rejected of men went out to overthrow an ancient social order, a bare hall in London from which one night John Wesley issued, his soul afire, to set the eighteenth century aflame. This gorgeous edifice can be either a help or a hindrance, and which of the two it will be in the end depends less on what I say here than on what you do here, on whether you flood this church with service and overflow it, so that across the world wherever there is need that you can meet your help goes generously forth.

When, therefore, the news comes that in the last ten months we have found jobs in this parish for about fifteen hundred people, it seems more possible in this pulpit to talk about Christ. When a letter comes that says, "No words ever can express how thankful we feel when we think of the shadow you have lifted from this home," one dares to hope that Christ may bless our words because we have tried to back them up with our deeds. As one sees service, not financial only but personal, flowing into ever wider areas of this city's need, one dares to think that Jesus of Nazareth, being at home in our work, may not feel an utter stranger in our pulpit.

If we have a gospel of love, we cannot merely talk about it. Love is something we must live seven days a week and not merely talk of one day a week. No man ever had a tongue that could make love convincingly real unless the words occasionally spoken were reinforced and confirmed in a fellowship of service habitually lived. When, therefore, the news comes that under the duress of this depression our contributions to benevolence in this congregation have steadily declined until they have struck bottom, over sixty per cent less than they were in 1929, that hurts not simply the causes which ask for help and are de-

clined but the preacher too. It is as though some words that he would speak and ought to speak do not weigh so much or reach so far.

For example, I have helped train scores of students, fine youths as eager about life as you and I ever were. Because they have known that this Christian fellowship we speak about is international, they have gone out across all the national and racial boundaries, and in types of enterprise which we, investigating personally, can vouch for, they are investing themselves to the hilt. How, then, do you expect me contentedly in this gorgeous edifice to talk about Christ if the fellowship I am supposed to lead is steadily declining in its effective responsibility for the sort of work they are trying to do?

In solemn earnest I plead with you. Times are better. For many people they are better. We are the class of people who first will feel the improvement. I want that improvement registered in increased gifts available for benevolence this next year. The enterprises on our list have been investigated and we vouch for them. They come, not from one denomination but from several. They are worth giving to. "One body, . . . severally members one of another" —the man who first said that was taking into his thought all the nations and races of the Roman Empire. How can I talk about it if we do not live it?

In the third place, the importance of the Christian fellowship is accentuated in the light of our modern civilization's appalling condition. Indeed, religion faces today a situation the like of which it has rarely faced before. For while hitherto religion has often been torn and troubled and plunged into controversy, almost always the choice has been between one kind of religion and another. Today, however, millions of people face the choice, not between this and that religion but between any religion and sheer paganism, downright materialistic secularism of thought and life.

It is not accidental, therefore, that forward-looking leaders in Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism today feel a new sense of common cause and mutual interdependence. So strong indeed is it that it has been organized now in the National Conference of Jews and Christians. For while the differences between Judaism, Protestantism, and Catholicism are very real, they are superficial compared with the difference between the ethical and spiritual life that all together they try to stand for, on one side, and, on the other, the downright paganism that afflicts wide areas of our people. The real conflict in our nation is not between one religion and another but between any religion and the appalling moral consequence of our irreligion. Indeed, this is a world phenomenon, so that forward-looking missionaries in Japan, China, and India are saying that they can no longer adequately phrase the nub of their problem in terms of Christianity against Buddhism or against Confucianism, but rather in terms of all the best in Christianity and Buddhism and Confucianism against the rising tide of materialistic, atheistic secularism.

When a community has to face a flood, some differences of opinion sink into the background. Today we face a flood. It is not primarily Methodism, Episcopalianism or the Baptist tradition which is at stake; it is not primarily Judaism or Catholicism or Protestantism that is at stake; it is the basic idea of life interpreted in spiritual

terms and dedicated to spiritual ends, the common property of all religion, that is at stake.

Indeed, many people who never have made much of their own religion, who have been sleazy and loose-jointed about it, begin to see that. Were I to plead today for a renewal of ethical religion that would elevate the standards of personal integrity and social service in this nation, I could count, I suspect, upon general agreement concerning the need of that. Well, if we are to have a renewal of ethical religion which will lift the standards of personal integrity and public service, where is it coming from? It must come from the religious community, from a renewal in the life of the churches. We cannot get it from a vacuum. We cannot pick it from the air. If we want better education, we must get better schools. If we want better children we must have better homes. If we want better civic conditions, we must have better governments. Always when we want something personally better we have to think about some institution and what we are doing with it. We may not like that. It always plunges us into practical problems and difficulties. A thousand times easier to say vaguely and in general, as many do, that we would like a renewal of ethical religion to elevate the standards of personal and social character, but to say that and leave it there is mere wind and fustian. Do we care enough about that to care about the church?

Of course, the most vital and sacrificial evidence of care is personal allegiance and service. I plead for that. For all of it that so generously has gone into this church's life this past year I am grateful. Nevertheless, even in the realm of financial loyalty, we are dealing here with a matter of large dimensions. I mean that in this country we do not depend for the support of our churches on the state but on the voluntary gifts of their members. That separation between church and state historically was a great achievement and we have every right to congratulate ourselves upon it and be glad that we are trusting our members and not the government for support now. Nevertheless, while we have not trusted the state for our support, we have trusted something else—rich men, large gifts from munificent givers. There is nothing in history to compare with the munificence poured out from vast accumulations of wealth upon the universities, the philanthropies, and the churches of this nation. But, my friends, we are at the end of that era. Make no mistake about it, that epoch draws toward its close. There are gentlemen in this congregation now who, out of every dollar they get, pay in total taxes eighty-seven cents to local, state, and federal governments. Whether we think about universities or philanthropies or churches, we are going out into a day where, unless we can mass the accumulated loyalties of an ever larger number of small givers, conscientiously giving all they can, to replace the necessarily depleted gifts of great givers, our universities, our philanthropies, and our churches may not weather the storm. In this budget sermon, pleading for the democratic support of this church, I am dealing with one of the realest problems of our generation. The whole basis of support for our spiritual and social enterprises is shifting. We are going out into a day where only the massed accumulation of loyalty on the part of ever larger numbers of small contribu-

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Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal Spirit, Who from everlasting to everlasting art the source and substance and goal of life, we lift our hearts to Thee. All too hospitably open to inferior appeals we confess that we have been. We have put our lives at the disposal of lesser fingers that have brought from them evil tunes. Today we would put ourselves at Thy disposal, O God, most high, most holy. Play upon us, we beseech Thee, some harmonies of peace and concord, of aspiration and integrity, that we may go from this sanctuary nobler persons to live more useful lives.

Give us the grace of conscientious penitence, a deeper insight into Thy will for us, some new source of interior power with which to live our lives well. O strong west wind of God, that takest the fogs away and leavest the sun bright and the skies blue and the air fresh, blow through our souls, we pray.

Give us, we beseech Thee, a nobler care for ourselves. Thou hast trusted us with ourselves. We would not fail Thee from any lack of inner integrity and rightness. Grant, we pray Thee, that there may be within us this day some change of attitude, some access of converting grace from on high, that we may be more worthy of the trust that Thou hast reposed in us when Thou didst give us to ourselves to keep.

Grant, we pray Thee, a nobler care for our family and friends. We stand in humble awe when we think of the power that is reposed in us when others love us. Grant, we pray Thee, fidelity, dependability, the sense of responsibility, loyalty to those who have trusted us, that because we have worshipped here our friendships and our families may be more beautiful.

Give us, we beseech Thee, a nobler care for all the hungry, sick, and afflicted sons of men. If we sit in comfort let us not forget the comfortless. At times we see by how narrow a margin we have made this world, that might be so beautiful, so sorry a place instead. With a little more sanity and goodwill what could we not make of this poor earth! Grant, we pray Thee, such a care for those overridden by miseries that we will give ourselves no rest until we establish righteousness and peace in the earth.

Grant us, we pray Thee, a grateful and loyal care for Thy church. For its great traditions, for the long story of its nobler souls who have caught the spirit of the Christ and who have served mankind by what they did and by what they were, we thank Thee. For the cross, where the church was born, where the Christ foresaw in sacrifice the coming of a kingdom of Thy grace and brotherhood upon the earth, we thank Thee. We beseech Thee that we may enter as worthy and sacrificial participants into the great fellowship of the Christian people. We ask it in the spirit of the Christ. Amen.

Our Summer Program

THE summer season has come to be a highly interesting part of the year for The Riverside Church. No more interesting development has come about in the past twenty years in this congregation than is involved in the transformation of the summer schedule of services and activities from absolute zero back in 1920 and prior to that to a schedule of Sunday morning services from June to October that registers an average attendance of well over fifteen hundred persons and that rises to a peak of twenty-five hundred during the five Sundays the Summer Schools are in session.

But it is not only the Sunday morning service of worship that is maintaining itself at a high level of interest and effectiveness. There is very definite evidence of interest on the part of the community in continuing through the summer many of the week-day and week-night activities that carry on regularly throughout the winter. The social and recreational program of the young people very naturally becomes largely an out-of-door activity with the coming of summer weather. In the past this change has largely eliminated the church as a factor. But increasingly these activities have been coming back to the church and its organizations for sponsorship, direction, and help. Now the summer "activities" chart shows very little curtailment in so far as the number of events and the people involved are concerned over the regular listing. The scene shifts somewhat but the starting-point is the church and it is the church toward which the cars and buses turn when the day is done or the week-end is over. It is apparent that having an open mind toward this question of summer programs in a city like New York may well add a matter of three or four months to the so-called "active" year. In fact it may help us in the end to be a factor in the lives of our people for the full twelve months, an end certainly to be devoutly desired. But it is not just a matter of taking on extra months. Because they are such very different months, with the out-of-door emphasis very prominent, and with such other unusual factors as the presence of tourists and visitors in greater numbers than come at any other time of the year, adding also the fact that the schools are not in session, because of these and many other more or less hidden factors, it is a particularly stimulating and challenging opportunity. It calls for initiative and imagination to make the church plant and the church program become available in a radically different situation than obtains regularly.

This summer the outstanding advance we are making is the maintenance of a week-day religious educational program during July and August. Once we said, and with approximate accuracy, that summer schools for children had no place in the scheme of things with us because our children and the children of our neighborhood were all in the country. Well, that was true on Park Avenue and it was true at Fifth Avenue and Forty-sixth Street in so far as our own congregation was concerned. But it is not true here at Riverside Drive and 122nd Street. Scores of families with small children move into our area for the weeks of the summer school sessions. They are teachers from the schools and colleges of the country

from Maine to California and they literally take over this hill for those weeks, and welcome they are. Now we are going to welcome their children, too, at least some of them, with something more than a spoken word or a gesture.

But something else has happened, too, that gives us a privilege and an opportunity for service in the summer time. Not so many families are going to the country for the summer now as has been the case in happier times and so we find that our church has a greater opportunity than formerly.

We look forward with keen interest to the acceleration of the summer schedule and we welcome the preachers who are coming to our pulpit this summer with the announcement that they will be a part, each of them, of a continuing church program into which the Sunday morning worship service will fit even as is the case during the rest of the year. We believe we are moving toward a church experience in which the level of interest and participation will remain more steady throughout the year than this church, to speak only for ourselves, has ever previously achieved.

THE SUMMER PREACHERS

Dr. Fosdick will preach regularly on Sunday mornings up to and including June 7th, on which day he will also conduct the communion service in the afternoon, the last communion service until fall. Dr. Carder will preach on June 14th, and on June 21st the first of our guest preachers will be in the pulpit. We are fortunate indeed to have been able to secure the men who are to lead us in our worship this summer and we assure them of a cordial welcome and a wide hearing. The Summer School contingent will be happy to find that again this year, as previously when it has been possible, Dr. Fosdick will preach on the Sundays the students are in the city, July 12th to August 9th inclusive.

June 21st—REV. ROBERT RUSSELL WICKS, D.D., Dean of the Chapel, Princeton University. Often in our pulpit in the past, he has an assured place among us.

June 28th—Rev. Robert W. Searle, D.D., General Secretary of The Greater New York Federation of Churches, a man who serves the entire family of churches in New York and who carries on his heart and mind our common problems.

July 5th—Rev. Harold Cooke Phillips, D.D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Phillips comes to us from a great church and from a great ministry but before all of that he is to the ministers and people of The Riverside Church a close and valued friend.

August 16th to September 6th (inclusive)—Rev. James Gordon Gilkey, D.D., Pastor of the South Congregational Church, Springfield, Mass., another intimate friend of ministers and people here even as also a distinguished preacher.

September 20th—Rev. John S. Whale, M.A., President, Chestnut College, Cambridge, England. President Whale is one of the better known of the younger leaders of the Free Churches in England, an outstanding preacher whose lectures on religion have been broadcast this past year in Great Britain and who is just now collaborating with the Dean of St. Paul's in a new series of lectures on "The Problem of Evil."

Daily Vacation Bible Schools

By Walter M. Howlett

In New York City and vicinity, there were 254 Daily Vacation Bible Schools last summer with 24,622 pupils enrolled. There were 1,946 teachers, who gave practically full time to the work for the children for five or six weeks beginning July 1st. This is the most effective example of Protestant coöperation on behalf of all the denominations there is. They form a solid front for the sake of the children during the summer months. The work is carried on by the Metropolitan Federation of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, which is in turn closely affiliated with the Greater New York Federation of Churches.

Daily Vacation Bible Schools were started in 1898 by the Baptist City Mission Society, but soon became international and interdenominational. They have spread throughout the world until last year there were 20,000 schools with over two million children enrolled.

It is the most effective Christian education instrument we have outside the home. In the first place, it comes in vacation time when there is little competition for the children's time. It uses the methods of progressive education. The children come because they want to do so. They work in ways they thoroughly enjoy. They dramatize the Bible stories, sing songs and hymns and memorize passages from the Bible. They make things with their hands and have a thoroughly good time. Thus religion becomes a joyous, desirous experience. That is real education. The children are the chief beneficiaries, but the effect on the teachers is quite as important as that on the children. The Daily Vacation Bible School makes definite recruits of the teachers as church workers. They experience what the Gospel can do in making better lives for the children and for themselves. Many of the teachers decide that Christian work is the greatest opportunity in life. There are a number of people in pulpits in New York City and others in the mission fields throughout the world because of their experience in the Daily Vacation Bible Schools. It recruits new children for the Sunday School and new families affiliate with the church.

The Daily Vacation Bible School is successful in reaching the spiritually illiterate, yet every year it is finding a more assured place in the program of the normal Protestant Church.

There were 59 Daily Vacation Bible Schools in colored churches in New York City and vicinity last year with 7,199 pupils enrolled. This is one organization which is vitally interested in our colored children. One reason is the splendid leadership of our Rev. Horatio S. Hill.

The Protestant Teachers Association of New York City is a unique work. There is nothing else like it anywhere in the world. They contributed about ten thousand dollars for Weekday Schools of Religion and Daily Vacation Bible Schools last year. The president of this outstanding organization is Dr. Rufus M. Hartill.

The Metropolitan Federation of Daily Vacation Bible Schools is located at 71 West 23rd Street, New York City. The

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Keeping the Sanctuary Shipshape

By Grace H. Patton

It was almost midnight in the big, silent church. High up in the tower a single light was visible. The minister sat at his desk deep in thought. He had come back to his study at this untimely hour to check up on a special matter that lay on his mind.

"How very quiet it is in this church at night," he thought, as he became conscious of the almost uncanny silence. "What a huge contrast to the daytime, when it is a perfect beehive of busyness." He listened. Not a single sound. It seemed ghostly and unreal.

Suddenly a key was inserted in the lock of his study door. The minister jerked himself erect. Who?—WHO?—at this hour of the night? Was he, a minister, going to have a tussle with a burglar? That would be interesting.

The key turned. The door opened. In stepped a woman. She was most apologetic. "Oh, I *am* sorry!" she exclaimed. "I should have knocked; but I had no idea there was anyone here at this hour. I was attending to some things in the building and came up to have a look at your curtains—to see if they were in need of repair."

The minister sat back and laughed. Wasn't that just like a minister's life? To think he was going to have an exciting moment with a midnight marauder—alone, high up in a church tower; the time, eleven-forty-five; the locale, a city of varied crimes—and to come down to just facing the house manager intent on conditioning curtains!

As the minister thought the incident over afterward, he was impressed, even more forcibly than ever, with the amount of work involved in keeping a big city church clean and in order. He wondered why it had so often been the custom for churches to give little attention to this aspect of their work, not minding at all if there were, quite literally, bats in the belfry and cobwebs in the corners. Other public places in the city—such as office buildings, schools, libraries and museums—keep cleaning forces scrubbing and scouring well on into the night. Even places of entertainment do the same. Right here in New York itself, Radio City, that enticing "showplace of the nation," boasts that its vast Music Hall is never empty. As soon as the last late show is over and the people pour out, the night cleaning corps comes in, and it keeps going until it is time for the first morning performance. Why then should not churches, who, in theory at least, rate cleanliness as next to godliness, also be kept shipshape?

It costs The Riverside Church approximately $18,500 a year to keep clean. It takes a staff of sixteen persons—the house manager, her able strong-man assistant, eight porters, four maids, a playground attendant and a window cleaner—to combat Manhattan's dustiness and dirt. The housekeeping department has the oversight of everything not in the engineer's field. It must report all things out of order. It must see that no dust remains anywhere, even in the loud speakers! There must be no musty smells or odor of disinfectants.

Closets, store-rooms, supply shelves and lockers must be ready for inspection at any time. The halls, cloisters, and corridors must be kept free of footprints and litter.

This last undertaking is not very easily accomplished in a building where people come and go, from eight-thirty in the morning until eleven in the evening, to the tune of about 1400 a day, every day in the week. A great number of these comers and goers are sightseers. They are "doing New York." They may have just left Grant's Tomb and are now on their way to the Bronx Zoo, and Riverside Church comes in their line of march. And the same type of psychology which governs their conduct in other public places is with them as they tramp through a church. Quite often the dropped cigarette stubs and sprinkled ashes, the scattered bits of paper and even more objectionable marks of defacement left in their train, bear witness to the fact that they have come and seen and passed on.

The incessant passing of these thousands of people—even of those who are careful and thoughtful (for the elect as well as the Philistines are bound to bring into the sanctuary some of the deposit from the sidewalks of New York)—makes shipshapeness a difficult task. Added to the damage which humans do is the fact that nature herself shows no favoritism to ecclesiastical property. Indeed, in this case, she seems to be deliberately profane. For she produces, in this special section of the city, fierce, terrific, high winds, which focalize (and vocalize also!) with irreverent fury on Riverside Church. All of these factors make it necessary for the cleaning corps at the church to be unceasingly vigilant. It is no wonder that, a certain number of days in the week, porters and maids are found working more than half of the night.

Care of the church is not confined, by any means, to the inside of the building. Now that a playground, playhouse, and garden have been added, these also must be attended to. And the housekeeping department has to see to the removal of snow from the sidewalks surrounding the church, a distance equal to *six city blocks*! The department acquired, during the unending storms of last winter, its own motorized snow-plow; and that is now part of its permanent housekeeping equipment.

Five hundred room set-ups have to be maintained a week at Riverside. Dwellers in New York's constricted apartments become used to converting, at short notice, a living room into a dining room or bedroom. But would they not find it quite a task if, for instance, they had to do as Riverside does every Sunday—set up, within a few hours, the same room, first for the parents' group, then for a Friends' Meeting (where the men and women have their chairs placed facing each other) and, finally, for the hostess's evening social hour with the young people? This is just one of the many quick changes that are constantly having to be made. On days when the women are sewing, certain much-used rooms have to be reset three or four times during the day. And this does not mean simply shoving sewing-machines and tables to one side, banishing dirt into a corner, and putting the chairs back into place. Every dropped patch, needle, and thread is removed, the whole place is made trim and tidy, and it is as though the sewing circle had never, never been.

There are several different kinds of floors to be cared for at Riverside

Church. Would you like to know what they are? Cement, linoleum, marble, terrazzo, tile, wood, and slate—to say nothing of the dozens of stone steps. Each of these kinds of floor requires a different sort of treatment. You can't just grab a pail of water in one hand, and soap and brush in the other, and swish-swash ahead. Here, for instance, are ways in which just two of the floor family must be treated. Linoleum is swept, then scrubbed with hot water and a certain kind of crystals; it is then rinsed in clear, warm water and afterward waxed. Marble is first swept or vacuumed, then scrubbed with hot water and crystals. Spots are removed with a carborundum stick and after that the floor is waxed and polished. There are two kinds of wood floor, regular and antique; and the antique wood requires quite a different treatment from the other. Then there are the floor coverings—rugs and carpets. On them are used the carpet-sweeper, vacuum cleaner and shampoo process. To clean all the floors about fifteen kinds of cleansers are used. Think these small items over, O you housekeepers who are now engaged in the spring cleaning process!

Last year, when the Church Exhibition was on, visitors were appalled at the size and number of cleaning implements required to keep Riverside out of the black. Mops, brooms, pails, brushes and cleaning fluids are purchased by the dozen, floor wax in 55-gallon drums, and dusting and cleaning cloths by the hundreds of yards. They found that the vacuum cleaner goes over nearly 500 pew cushions once a fortnight (in spring these cushions have to be de-mothed) and that 850 chairs are vacuumed weekly. Then there is the daily dusting of uncounted pieces of furniture upon which pours the city's deposit of smudge, smoke, and soot.

Housefurnishings must be kept in order and in sufficient supply. Rugs and curtains have to be mended, dry cleaned, and sometimes turned to the other side. Draperies, slip-covers, upholstery, table linen, china, glassware, silverware, vases, candlesticks, and the innumerable small things needed for the serving of dinners have to be carefully counted and rapidly replaced. And it goes without saying that the kitchens of Riverside—of which there are eleven, large and small—must be fresh and immaculate.

Articles needed in the conducting of the church services must not be neglected. Dusty collection plates must not be passed before potential donors. The Communion service is cleaned and polished once every month. Hymn books are always being repaired. The ministers' robes must be cleaned, mended, and kept in good shape. (In her early days at Riverside the present house manager, when asked to list among her other purchases a pair of suspenders for the minister, was rather at a loss to know just what her position actually was. She was enlightened, however, when she discovered that the baptismal robe worn by an officiating clergyman has to have suspenders to hold up the long rubber boots.) And it is not always known to the uninitiated that, just off the narthex, there is a dear little dressing room used only for weddings. That must, of course, be kept sweet and attractive for the last-minute touches to the fluttery bride.

The choir of the church comes in for considerable amount of valeting. Cottas must be washed and ironed monthly, and pressed once a week. Cassocks must be frequently dry cleaned, and

their collars and cuffs laundered every two weeks. Choir room and ushers' room have to be set straight after Sunday's activities. Both of these groups have individual lockers for their members, and these lockers have a way of accumulating things. The ushers especially—actuated, no doubt, by an unconscious hangover from boyhood, when they made the traditional small boys' use of providentially provided pockets—have the habit of secreting in their lockers all manner of irrelevant and unusherlike articles. The house manager has to forage around, once every so often, making a collection of these unclassified treasures.

There are lockers also in the gym; and lockers, wherever located, seem to call for a good deal of housekeeping attention. The gymnasium equipment must also be looked after, towels furnished and the showers kept clean. On Church Night dinner evenings the gymnasium is fitted up as a huge dining room; and on festive occasions, as a gay social hall. All traces of gym equipment are removed, the floor is covered with a gigantic carpet, the walls are hung with India prints, comfortable furniture is installed, and a portable fireplace has even been known to grace one end of the room. All of these changes require much time, work, and housekeeping ingenuity.

Many other duties fall to the lot of the housekeeping staff at Riverside; but they are too numerous to mention. No doubt some day in the future an enterprising person will get to work on a book about "Good Churchkeeping," and find it an unentered field. If possible that person ought to write in a large, loose-leaf note-book. For to such a subject as this there is never any end.

SERMON

(*Continued from page 136*)

tors will save the day for our spiritual endeavors.

That is what has carried us through so far here—over two thousand of you giving. I plead for the continuance and the increase of your generosity. "One body, . . . severally members one of another," each conscious of his obligation—only that can make us worthy of our opportunity.

PRAYER

Eternal God, our Father, we would say to Thee in the sanctuary, What wouldst Thou have us to do? Save us from being merely hearers of the word and not doers of it, and give us a conscientious, financial sense of honor that we may not lack chivalry in dealing with our possessions.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon on March 22, 1936.

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DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS

(*Continued from page 142*)

President is Dr. Walter H. Rollins; the General Secretary, Rev. Walter M. Howlett; and the Treasurer, Mr. Edward Paul Schell. The total cost of this work during the last season was $40,689, of which $15,478.72 was provided through the treasury of the Metropolitan Federation of Daily Vacation Bible Schools. Each church supports its own school as far as possible. Every denominational mission society helps. The general organization trains the teachers, supervises the work and supplies whatever may be necessary in a weaker church to make a school possible.

From Junior High School Boys' Club

As president of the boys' club, I feel that the parents of the members of the club and others would like to know what takes place in our club room on Friday evening. The advisor of the group, Arthur C. Brooks, tries to plan an able program for the meetings.

First, one might like to know where our club is located in the church and what the name of the club is. Our club room is small and is located on the sixth floor on the east side of the tower. The name of the club is the three T's, which means Thirty Thousand Things. The time of the club is limited to an hour and a half (7:30 to 9:00). There are two main officers in our group, the president and the secretary, and parliamentary procedure is followed as far as possible. Recently we had two speakers come to talk on their profession, since we at the time were thinking what we wanted to be when we became of age to work. At the beginning of the club in October, the group planned a hike which came out most successfully. Shortly after the hike, the basketball season was approaching, and we asked for the gym on Saturday mornings. The gym was granted to us and we had much enjoyment. Later on we played some basketball games with an outside group. About Christmas time one of the members suggested that we start a library, and it was agreed upon. When all the boys brought in about five books apiece, which they thought would be of interest to the group, we had a fairly nice library and still have it going. Reports about the books, brought in by the participating members themselves, are often given during the club period. One of the club meetings was devoted entirely to the winter sports of Canada. At this occasion we had movies which we had borrowed.

One of the main objects of this club is to meet other boys and have responsibilities given to the members. One reason for having outside speakers is to know what the outside world is faced with and to get the opinions of others on certain problems. This club has been a most successful one.

EDWIN R. VELEBER

THE NEW AND THE OLD

If our Pilgrim ancestors could be brought to New York to inspect our fine and up-to-date Riverside Church, how horrified they would be to discover some of our recent developments.

In the good old days, even smiling on Sundays was looked upon with some suspicion by our Pilgrim forefathers. On the same principle, many of the harmless activities that we allow and enjoy today in our church such as bowling, dancing, cooking, dining and gym work would have been taboo at that time.

Most of us admit that the Puritan idea of a solemn, mirthless existence would not fit in with our plan of things today, although it accomplished much at the time as a remedy for the Godless trend of the times.

So let us be thankful that we can enjoy life today in a modern community, where it is not a sin to be happy. Furthermore, we know, on the authority of the best psychologists, that plenty of good, wholesome activity, whether it be bowling, boxing, dining or dancing, is the best way to keep us out of mischief.

TED VAN VALKENBURG

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INTERMISSIONS

"Time out" has become an item in our regular order of service in the Men's Class. We all quite know what to do in that brief period and we proceed with gusto and good will to greet the men nearest to us, be they old friends or casual visitors. But "time out" becomes a problem for many of us when it is measured in terms of the summer months and the interruption of the schedule which has become so much a part of us. But such interruptions are in themselves a part of the scheduled things of life and offer opportunities for giving meaning and significance to all the regular offices and appointments. They challenge us to keep on going without the persuasion of whip or spur; to try out without the example or support of stronger friends the faith we have perhaps too easily expressed; to keep our tryst through the dark and in spite of separations even as we have kept in it the light and the friendly atmosphere of a place and an experience of fellowship.

So it is in the larger circle of the church congregation. Most of us will be taking "time out" from our regular duties in the months ahead. Some will get a week-end "now and then," some a month, and some will take the entire summer for travel or other recreation. THE CHURCH MONTHLY would voice for the whole congregation a God-speed to each of you and a safe return when "Play" is called.

The twenty-seventh of September will mark the opening of the regular fall program. On that Sunday Dr. Fosdick will be back in the pulpit following his summer holiday and the Church School will hold its first session.

FIVE SERMONS

by

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

"Let Us All Give In to Temptation"

"The Church Must Go Beyond Modernism"

"On Being a Realistic Pacifist"

"Decision of Character"

"Giving the Highest a Hearing"

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